

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AGRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00
NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 AID-05 CEA-01
COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03 INR-07 SP-02 STR-06 TRSE-00
LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 IO-13 ITC-01 PM-05 H-01
L-03 PA-01 PRS-01 SS-15 /091 W
-----008817 131825Z /46

O 131510Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9877
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 0783

USEEC

STATE PASS USDA

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ETRD, EEC, CY, IT
SUBJECT: EC CYPRUS RELATIONS

REF: (A) BRUSSELS 526, (B) BRUSSELS 701, (C) 77 ROME 20037

1. EMBOFF CALL ON STEA ANTONINI (MFA OFFICIAL RESPONSIBLE FOR
EC EXTERNAL ECONOMIC AFFAIRS) JAN. 13 MAINLY TO ASK ABOUT
CURRENT GOI POSITION FOLLOWING DISCUSSIONS HELD ON
JAN. 11 BETWEEN CYPRIOT MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
CHRISTOPHIDES AND GOI MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS FORLANI
AND MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE MARCORA. STEA SAID
CHRISTOPHIDES HAD MADE FULL PRESENTATION OF ECONOMIC AND
POLITICAL EFFECTS IMPLEMENTATION OF CURRENT EC INTERIM
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OFFER WOULD HAVE. GOI HAD ENDED BY SAYING IT WOULD REVIEW
ITS POSITION AND DO ITS BEST TO CONTRIBUTE TO AN IMPROVEMENT
OF EC OFFER AT JAN. 17 EC COUNCIL MEETING.

2. STEA WENT ON TO SAY, HOWEVER, THAT ROOM FOR FLEX-
IBILITY WAS NOT LARGE. THE TWO PRODUCTS THAT PRESENTED
THE MOST DIFFICULTY WERE NEW POTATOES AND TABLE GRAPES.

HE NOTED THAT ITALY HAD DESTROYED (CONVERTED TO ALCOHOL) IN 1977 TWICE THE POTATOES THAT CYPRUS EXPORTS, THAT SURPLUS POTATO PRODUCTION REMAINS PREVALENT THROUGHOUT MUCH OF THE EC, THAT SURPLUS POTATOES WOULD AGAIN HAVE TO BE DESTROYED THIS YEAR AND THAT FARMERS AT AVEZZANO HAD BEEN DEMONSTRATING IN THE LAST FEW DAYS AGAINST THE LACK OF A MARKET. HE INDICATED GOI MIGHT BE ABLE TO EXTEND SEASONAL PERIOD OF NO OR LOW TARIFFS FOR POTATOES AND GRAPES BEYOND DATES AS NOW FIXED, BUT PROBABLY NOT BY MORE THAN A MONTH OR TWO.

3. STEA SAID GOI IS CONCERNED ABOUT POLITICAL SITUATION IN CYPRUS AND WANTED TO MAKE CONCESSIONS, BUT IT WAS NOT APPROPRIATE TO MAKE SUCH CONCESSIONS FOR PRODUCTS THAT WERE NOT SUPPORTED (TUTELATI) BY EC COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY (CAP). HE SAID EC HAD BEEN IN HABIT OF MAKING TARIFF CONCESSIONS FOR MEDITERRANEAN PRODUCTS ALMOST NONE OF WHICH ENJOYED CAP SUPPORT WHILE ITALY WAS FORCED TO BUY SURPLUS PRODUCTS OF NORTHERN EC COUNTRIES. HE INDICATED GOI HAD TAKEN POSITION WITH CHRISTOPHIDES AS WELL AS WITHIN EC THAT GOI WOULD HELP IMPROVE EC INTERIM OFFER IN MEASURE THAT PROGRESS IS MADE ON REFORM OF CAP TO COVER MEDITERRANEAN PRODUCTS.

4. COMMENT. IT APPEARS THAT GOC CAMPAIGN HAS HAD AN IMPACT AND THAT GOI IS PREPARED TO GO ALONG WITH MODIFI-
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CATIONS OF EC OFFER ON INTERIM MEASURES THAT, BY POSTPONING DATES FOR SEASONAL CHANGES IN TARIFF RATES ON THE MOST IMPORTANT PRODUCTS, APPARENTLY WOULD AMOUNT TO ROUGHLY THE SAME THING AS PRESERVATION OF 1977 ARRANGEMENTS THROUGH A NEGOTIATING PERIOD EXTENDING UP TO JUNE 30. EMBASSY BELIEVES EMBOFF'S INQUIRIES AT MFA MAY SERVE AS A SUFFICIENT APPROACH TO GOI ON THIS MATTER FOR THE TIME BEING WHEN TAKEN TOGETHER WITH OTHER CONVERSATIONS OF U.S. OFFICIALS REPORTED IN REFTELS. IN ANY CASE, THOSE WEIGHING QUESTION OF WHETHER WE SHOULD MAKE APPROACHES SHOULD ALSO CONSIDER THAT DOING SO COULD HAVE SOME PRICE IN TERMS OF RECEPTION GIVEN U.S. AGRICULTURAL REQUESTS IN MTN (MANY OF WHICH STRONGLY AFFECT ITALIAN INTERESTS) AS WELL AS POLITICAL SITUATION IN ITALY. FINALLY, CONTRARY TO EXPECTATION EXPRESSED REF B AND INDICATED ALSO BY EARLIER CONVERSATION WITH STEA REPORTED REF C, HE SAID THERE CURRENTLY WAS NO DIFFERENCE OF VIEW BETWEEN MFA AND MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE ON THIS ISSUE. GARDNER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ROME00783
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780020-0879
Format: TEL
From: ROME USEEC
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780165/aaaaccum.tel
Line Count: 113
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 0522fce3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 BRUSSELS 526, 78 BRUSSELS 701, 77 ROME 20037
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3777281
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EC CYPRUS RELATIONS
TAGS: ETRD, CY, IT, EEC
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/0522fce3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014